

**LACDMH CONGRATULATES 2012 EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR**  
**By Karen Zarsadias-Ige, Public Information Officer**



On Thursday, October 18, 2012, the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) HONORS Committee celebrated the department's 2012 Employees of the Year at the California Endowment in downtown Los Angeles. This year, there were six individual award winners along with a team.

The LACDMH Employee of the Year program is designed so employees can honor their extraordinary colleagues. During this year's nominating process, 120 employees took the time to nominate more than 300 fellow workers. Comprised of a diverse group of employee peers, the HONORS Committee reviewed all the nominations and scored them based on the criteria aligned with LACDMH's mission and values.

"This is one of those days we honor those who make contributions to making the lives of others better," said LACDMH Director Marvin Southard, D.S.W.

This year's surprise Hero Award was given at the end of the ceremony to LACDMH Deputy Director, Tony Beliz, Ph.D., for all his contributions to the department and for his work with the Emergency Outreach Bureau. "There isn't a day I wake up that I'm not excited to see what there is to do that day," Dr. Beliz told the audience. "I want to thank all of you and thank the staff for making this happen."

LACDMH's Employees of the Year for 2012 are:

**Promotion of Wellness & Recovery:**  
Irma Vallejos, Community Worker, Northeast Wellness Center



**Dedicated Support Services:**  
Jae Kim, L.C.S.W., Psychiatric Social Worker II, Older Adult System of Care



Elbiss Gerigourian, Staff Assistant II, Child Welfare Division, Children's System of Care



**Dedicated Direct Services:**

David Loaiza, Substance Abuse Counselor, Edelman Westside Mental Health Center and Wellness Center



### **Leadership:**

Angel Rendon, M.D., Mental Health Psychiatrist, Roybal Family Mental Health Center



### **Career Achievement:**

Sandra D. Thomas, L.C.S.W., Deputy Director, Transition Age Youth System of Care Bureau





### **Outstanding Team Work:**

Partners in Suicide Prevention Team (Aileen Montoya/Older Adults System of Care, Anne Choe/Adult System of Care), Deborah Bielecki/Adult System of Care, Jae Kim/Older Adults System of Care, Martha Alamillo/Children's System of Care, Nelly Arias/Children's System of Care, Tasha McFashion-Stiger/Transition Age Youth System of Care, Terica Roberts/Transition Age Youth System of Care, Wilfred Paltanwala/Adult System of Care and William Barreto/Children's System of Care).



### **Hero Award:**

Tony Beliz, Ph.D., Deputy Director, Emergency Outreach Bureau

